Concordia UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE STUDIES NEWS

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From the Dean's Desk

Money Matters

Recently, the Senate Academic Planning and Priorities Committee of Concordia adopted the principle that the University should build its future on its existing strengths. This would suggest generally that strong units should be favoured over other units. Although Senate endorsed the principle, it is not always easy to see the correlation between this commitment and the reality of the annual budgetary process. It is by no means easy to see what units should actually be favoured, or what a "unit" might be.

A commitment to the rational and beneficial use of resources seems rather innocuous and persuasive. If, however, to achieve "beneficial use" one must first identify "existing strengths," then one must enter into a delicate exercise. Deans of Graduate Studies have an understanding and global view of most of the specific constituencies of their universities that is of considerable value in such an endeavour. Their university-wide responsibilities oblige them to reflect on the overall objectives of the academic community and to consider how interests which normally might be in conflict could be integrated and balanced.

The image and reputation of individual units of a university are elusive and are usually built over an extensive period of time. In fact, external recognition often precedes internal appreciation of the quality of a department or program. The remarkable rise of the Finance Department of our Faculty of Commerce and Administration in the ranks of prominent research-oriented Canadian departments is a good case in point. A recent report on Finance Research in Canadian Management and Administration Faculties, prepared by researchers at the University of Toronto, states that "over the last five years, the Concordia finance group has outpublished any other group at a Canadian university and ranks second in the overall quality index just behind Toronto and above U.B.C." This ranking constitutes not only a testimony to an impressive professional performance, it also signals to the University that the Department of Finance is one of its strong academic units.

The Faculty of Commerce and Adminstration could justly argue that such recognition should warrant further resource support by the University. A graduate dean, however, is also aware that other programs in different faculties are quietly establishing firm reputations through increased research funding, attracting high calibre students and faculty, publishing innovative papers, etc. In deliberations about the allocation of resources, this broad university-wide perspective is significant for the attempt to make planning a rational process.

At Concordia, the extent to which academic units are recognized by the University at large as units of strength seems to be not only a function of their externally recognized strength, but also of the degree to which they constitute autonomous units. When a high degree of autonomy plays an important role in judgments about resource allocation, once again graduate deans must play the role of drawing attention to other areas of academic and intellectual strength. The most obvious of these domains which comes to mind is interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary studies. They tend not to be assigned to discipline-oriented departments. Concordia has significant strength in interdisciplinary studies, but it is often hidden and diffused throughout the University.

Given the financial predicaments of resource-poor universities, it seems particularly fitting that a Department of Finance should have reached such national prominence. Perhaps we should employ our resident talent in the area of finance as an additional valuable resource for the refinement of our financial strategy for the future. We seem to have here a rare opportunity of putting fundamental research to immediate and visible use.

M.E. Szabo
Dean

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Chairman of the Board of Governors: André Gervais

by Barbara Verity

Bringing together various worlds comes naturally to André Gervais, a well-known Montreal lawyer who is Chairman of the Board of Governors at Concordia University.

When Gervais was a Loyola College student back in the 50s, he had to choose between his two main interests — business and law. He eventually decided to unite the two and become a corporate lawyer, a choice that has been particularly successful and pleasing to him.

Merging Traditions

His family background also provided a good example of bringing together two traditions. In this case, it was two languages and two cultures.

André Gervais, his two brothers and sister grew up in Sherbrooke in the Eastern Townships in a particularly bilingual, bicultural family. His father, who died when André was only 19, was French-speaking and his mother, Sylvia, is English-speaking and of Irish background.

"I feel very fortunate to speak both languages, but it is even better to live in both languages," he says.

Today he carries on his family tradition of moving freely between the English- and French-speaking communities of his province.

As Chairman of the Board at Concordia, he brings together two more traditions — the academic and non-academic, both of which are represented on the Board. "Each of the various groups of Governors representing the external community, faculty, students and staff has a different perspective," he says.

André Gervais also enjoys working closely with Rector Patrick Kenniff. "We discuss many issues, and I resolve even the most difficult ones by discussion until we agree on a course of action which we feel is appropriate and in the best interest of the university," Gervais says.

Board of Governors

The 40 member Board of Governors consists of the Chancellor and Rector (both of whom serve in an ex-officio capacity) as well as 23 representatives from the community-at-large, six faculty representatives, three representing alumni, one

André Gervais

representing staff, four representing undergraduate students and one representing graduate students. Concordia's three Vice-Rectors and Secretary-General are not members of the Board, but as officers of the university have full speaking privileges at meetings.

"I believe my role is to stimulate ideas, counsel, and attempt to demonstrate leadership qualities," Gervais explains. For instance, a few years ago when he heard that negotiations were underway for a new stadium at Loyola, he urged that the process be accelerated. Through his efforts, the stadium opened last October.

The Board's mandate, as defined by the University Charter, is to serve as the supreme decision-making body in all matters involving the finances and general administration of the university. Academic matters are governed by the university Senate, which has been given this authority by the Board.

The Board normally meets in full session on the third Wednesday of every month from September to June. The standing committees of the Board meet at the discretion of the person chairing the committee. All major facets of university life are represented by these committees, including finances, fund-raising, personnel, social policy, long-term planning and the awarding of honorary degrees.

Gervais, a gracious, friendly man with long-standing ties to Concordia, speaks enthusiastically about his involvement with the university. "Young people are interesting and exciting. It's fun to be with them. They are full of enthusiasm and always looking to the future. It makes working with the university very rewarding," he comments.

Whenever he visits Concordia, he takes his time moving through the university by escalator rather than by elevator to get a better sense of what is going on. And when he has a meeting with students, he's more likely to go to their CUSA (Concordia University Students' Association) office than have them come to his office on Sherbrooke Street.

Links with Concordia

André Gervais joined the Board in 1983, became Vice-Chairman in 1985, then Chairman in 1987. His links with Concordia, however, reach back to 1950 when he began his studies at Loyola College, which in 1974 amalgamated with Sir George Williams University to form Concordia. Deeply involved in student politics, he ran for President of the student body. He lost, however, and jokes now that he likes to think he was narrowly defeated.

The presidency was soon offered to him when the winner had to back out because of problems with studies. Gervais preferred not to take the post by default and instead went on to become President of the Arts Faculty. He also earned his Letter for excelling academically and athletically, and graduated in 1954.

Gervais' two brothers also attended Loyola. Paul graduated in 1948 and is now a judge of the Sherbrooke Superior Court. Marc graduated in 1950, became a Jesuit and is an internationally recognized authority on film. He teaches in Concordia's Communication Studies Department.

Gervais also has a sister, Constance-Marie Moisan, who is the Director of Volunteers at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Montreal.

The changes to Concordia since Mr. Gervais' time at Loyola are as vast as those that have come to society itself over the same period, he says.

In his Loyola days, there were 400 students, compared with the 26,000 now at

Concordia; Loyola was attended by boys only and was run by the Jesuit Order. Gervais lived in the residence, which was on the third floor of today's Adminstration Building.

While at Loyola, Gervais pondered a choice between his two main interests — law and business. He became a lawyer specializing in corporate, commercial and securities law. "I combined business and law this way," he says.

First graduating class

His father, Césaire, had also studied law, going on to become a judge of the Sherbrooke Superior Court. Gervais had planned to obtain his law degree at Université Laval, but when his father died, he decided to stay in his hometown of Sherbrooke rather than leave his mother alone in the large family home. Although the Université de Sherbrooke was too young to have established a reputation, he decided to take a chance at studying there. He went on to become a member of the first graduating class of the university's law faculty. He then attended McGill University for his final year of courses leading to a certificate of admission to the bar exams.

Gervais' first job was in 1958 with the law firm of Duquet, MacKay and Weldon. His starting salary was $350 — and that was monthly, he recalls. "I started work on Friday the 13th; luckily, I'm not superstitious," he jokes. The fact that today his law office is on the 13th floor of the Mercantile Building confirms this.

In 1966, he joined the firm, Dohney, Day Mackenzie and Lawrence, which specializes in all areas of law except criminal. Gervais describes the firm as one of the most bilingual in Quebec. The name itself, which is now Mackenzie Gervais, reflects this, as does the ability of most partners to work in French and English.

Quebec antiques and early Canadian art in the firm's decor speak of pride in the cultural traditions of English and French Canada. A large brass plaque in the lobby situates the firm deep in its history, listing all partnership names since the firm was founded in 1898.

As well as law, Gervais has carried on another family tradition. For many years, his mother, who now lives in Westmount, worked voluntarily for cultural organizations, such as Sherbrooke Community Concerts and the Sherbrooke Symphony Orchestra.

Volunteer work

For the past 32 years, André Gervais has worked voluntarily for the Montreal Symphony Orchestra. During that time he has served as President of the Junior Committee, as well as Secretary, Vice-President and Executive Vice-President of the Board of Directors. He is now a member of the Board.

Gervais' volunteer work extends to many charitable organizations, and his community work has included being an alderman in Westmount from 1977 to 1983.

Serving as Chairman of the Board of Governors now occupies most of his volunteer time. One of his keen interest is graduate studies. "They are really improving tremendously. I'm certainly interested in encouraging their development. It's always a thrill to see the number of Master's and Ph.D. degrees we give," he says.

Taking part in graduation day is one of the benefits of his role at Concordia — particularly when one of this children is receiving a degree. Gervais has two sons — Robert and Marc, and a daughter, Nathalie.

When Robert was graduating last June with his Bachelor of Fine Arts, Gervais was there on stage too at Place des Arts. Although normally only the Rector caps graduating students, on this occasion both the Rector and the Chairman shared the capping of graduate students. "I capped my son and gave him a hug. That was a big moment," Gervais recalls. ❑

Notice

The following federal granting agencies will be holding information sessions on campus. We urge anyone interested in applying for funding from these agencies to attend.

SSHRC - Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada

Date: Friday, September 14, 1990
Time Student Session: 10:30-12:00
Faculty Session: 14:00-15:30

NSERC - Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada

Date: Wednesday, September 19, 1990
Time: Student Session: 10:00-11:30
Faculty Session: 14:00-15:30

The Graduate Awards Office will conduct a Student Information Session for the provincial agency

FCAR - Fonds pour la Formation de Chercheurs et l'Aide à la Recherche

Date: Wednesday, September 26, 1990
Time: Student Session: 10:30-12:00

For location please contact the Graduate Awards Office (514) 848-3801

Appupillai Baskaran Wins CSCE Award

Every year the Canadian Society for Civil Engineering (CSCE) organizes a graduate student competition during its annual conference. This national competition provides a unique opportunity for graduate students to present their research work and to share their experiences with professionals from other universities. This competition is based on the oral presentation of a paper related to the ongoing research and the response to questions from the floor. To add more flavour for the competition CSCE also gives two prizes in the form of society membership. This year Mr. Appupillai Baskaran, a doctoral student in the Centre for Building Studies, who is working under the supervision of Dr. Ted Stathopoulos, participated and won a prize for his paper entitled, "Computer Simulation of 3D Wind Effects on Buildings."

Computational Wind Engineering (CWE) is a relatively young and challenging area which offers a new tool for the understanding of wind effects on buildings as opposed to the conventional experimental wind tunnel approach. Computer modelling has a high potential and several advantages in comparison to the wind tunnel experimentation. Nevertheless, careful validation of the computer algorithms is vitally important. As a first step towards this ambitious undertaking, the presented research has developed new computer code named "TWIST," standing for Turbulent Wind Simulation Technique. Extensive computations and comparisons have been made for a single building exposed to normal wind flow conditions. Various feasibility studies have also been performed to address the wind directionality effect, to model the multiple building configurations and to develop a micro-computer version of TWIST.

Mr. Baskaran will defend his doctoral thesis this month. ❑

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Graduate Program Secretarial Luncheon

by Anne Marie Laurin

Thursday, June 21, was the first day of summer, it was summer solstice, and it was the First Annual Secretarial Luncheon offered by the Division of Graduate Studies. The luncheon was given in honour of all the graduate program secretaries in appreciation of their diligence, dedication and cooperation in sharing the common goal of serving graduate students.

Thirty secretaries accepted the invitation extended to them by Dr. Manfred Szabo, Dean of Graduate Studies. The two hour luncheon took place in the Faculty Lounge dining room of the Hall Building where a hot and cold buffet was served.

The occasion provided an opportunity for the secretaries to develop an interpersonal relationship with their colleagues — for some, giving them an opportunity to fit a face to the name and telephone voice they so often deal with — for others, it was a reunion, and an opportunity to visit with good friends.

The luncheon was followed by a brief speech by Dean Szabo, thanking the secretaries for accepting the invitation, and commending them for their hard work.

It is the program secretary who sets up schedules for the Chairs and Program Directors, organizes the students through registration, offering guidance and advice in the absence of the Chair or Director, and smoothes the way for harried students before their thesis defence. It is the program secretary who hands those same students the final bound copies of their theses, and wishes them well for the future.

The secretaries run the day-to-day operation that keeps the department and program going. Chairs and Directors are elected every year. It is the secretaries who are the anchor, the pivotal force that make order and sense out of sometimes chaos. The crux of their organizational skills rests on keeping the student files and records in perfect order — for every department and every program, this might entail something different.

Microsoft Works

In appreciation for everything the secretaries do, Dean Szabo would like to introduce a program which would not only make their work easier, but would also integrate and facilitate communication between programs. "I have done extensive research on different databases and the best program that integrates with dBase, Lotus and Wordperfect, and that program is Microsoft Works. It is the most efficient and adaptable to fulfil your specific needs. Often information that is not easily accessible must be produced for a report, as in the case of programs which are appraised every seven years. It is time consuming to get access to reports. But now the pertinent information could be stored away on diskettes for easy accessibility. And if all the secretaries used the same system, the information would be readily available to other members of the university community. This system is not to be confused with the MIS, (Management Information System)," stated the Dean.

Dean Szabo explains Microsoft Works at Graduate Secretarial Luncheon

The MIS is an on-line system which handles universal information pertinent to the university community as a whole. Microsoft Works is a program specifically designed for the PC. It could serve as a electronic filing system, custom designed for the personal needs of each department, yet it would be compatible throughout the university community.

"Should any of you be interested in adapting such a system in your program, please contact me and we can arrange to have small groups of three of four people at a time at the Division to sit down and discuss the specific needs for your programs," offered Dean Szabo. "I must stress that this is on a purely voluntary basis. For any of you who would be interested, I would greatly appreciate your cooperation in helping the Division build a system that can someday be as easily accessible to other departments through an exchange of diskettes, or electronic copies," he concluded.

If you were not able to attend the luncheon, but would like more information on Microsoft Works, please contact Kali Sakell at 3803. ❑

Upcoming Doctoral Examinations

ZHENG, Jiang.
Dept. of Building Engineering
Date: Sept. 20, 1990 at 9:30 a.m.
Location: BE-346
Title: *Intra- and Inter-Zone Airflow with Heat and Mass Transfer in Multi-Zone Building*

BASKARAN, Appupillain
Dept. of Building Engineering
Date: Sept. 4, 1990 at 10:00 a.m.
Location: BE-346
Titlle: *Computer Simulation of 3D Turbulent Wind Effects on Buildings*

DIXON, Michael
Dept. of Psychology
Date: Sept. 7, 1990 at 10:00 a.m.
Location: H-769
Titlle: *Hypnotic Susceptibility Differences in the Automaticity of Verbal Information Processing*

The examination for Dixon will take place in the Hall Building, 1455 de Maisonneuve West, Montreal. The examinations for Zheng and Baskaran will take place at 1257 Guy Ave., Montreal.